IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraphs 0038, 0039, 0055, 0057, 0063 and 0064 of the specification as follows:

[0038]   A patient 102 may additionally seek healthcare services from a hospital 112 and may generally interact with hospital employees such as registration personnel 120 and scheduling personnel 118. Both registration personnel 120 and scheduling personnel 118 may have access to terminals or personal computers 113 and 115 that are connected to the hospital database and information system server(s) 116. The patient 102 may also interface with a kiosk ~~120~~ 117, which could be a terminal or personal computer that is connected to the hospital database and information system server(s) 116. The hospital database and information system server(s) 116 may also be connected to a communications network 114.

[0039]   A patient 102 may also seek healthcare services from a remote healthcare site 122 and interface with registration staff ~~120~~ 125 using a terminal or personal computer 123. The patient 102 may optionally access a kiosk 124 for his/her healthcare service needs. Each of the terminal or personal computer 123 and the optional kiosk 124 may be connected to a communications network 114.

[0055]   A hospital system 340 preferably provides patient information 306 to the OPSI system 300. The OPSI system 300 may return an event status ~~326~~ 327, insurance information 316, a medical necessity determination 304, a physician signature 324 and/or appointment information 310 to the hospital system 340.

[0057] In a common scenario, the patient 102 meets with his/her physician 108 on a particular health concern. Patient information 306 is retrieved and reviewed by the physician 108. Upon completion of the examination, the physician may recommend additional procedures such as an X-ray, MRI, or other tests performed at a hospital 112. The physician's office 106 submits a request via the OPSI system 300 including patient information 306, the physician's signature 324, and ordering physician information 314. The patient 102 may place a scheduling request 346 for preferred times and dates for the procedure. The OPSI system 300 may then transmit the patient information 306 to one or more of, for example: (i) the medical necessity system 302 where the medical necessity determination 304 is made and returned to the physician's system 342; (ii) the scheduling system 330 where the requested dates 308 may be considered before confirming an appointment 310 to the patient system 344 and the physician system 342; (iii) the third party payer system 332 where insurance information 316 is confirmed; and (iv) the hospital system 340 where event status information ~~326~~ 327, insurance information 316, the medical necessity determination 304, and appointment information 310 may be available. As information is passed between a plurality of independent databases and information systems, the OPSI system 300 may save pertinent information in a repository providing relevant information to all affected systems.

[0063] FIGS. 5A and 5B illustrate the preferred OPSI procedure crosswalk flow. The crosswalk flow describes a method of associating orders with scheduling and patient information. At the start 500, a user may enter specific classification and procedure information 502, which may be placed in a temporary storage location 504. The medical necessity test 400 and the eligibility/referral (insurance information) test 506 may then be performed. Upon

completing these tests, an appointment alias **508** may be referenced. A logical test may be

performed to determine if an appointment is necessary **510**. If an appointment is not necessary

512, patient information may be displayed or printed **514**. In this case, the patient need not be

scheduled in advance because a walk-in procedure is permitted. A preferred flow for this

sequence follows in FIG. 5B where the patient walks in ~~558~~ **564** and signs in ~~560~~ **566** to the

OPSI system **300**. The OPSI user may enter that the appointment is booked for today at the

current time (today and now) ~~562~~ **568**, and the appointment may be booked ~~564~~ **570**. The

registration ~~566~~ **572** and any physician orders ~~568~~ **574** may then be processed. Returning to FIG.

5A, if an appointment is necessary **512**, the system may ask the patient whether he/she wishes to

book an appointment **518**. If the patient decides to book an appointment, a list of appointment

times available for the requested procedures may be displayed **520**. The OPSI user may select

whether or not to restrict the appointment **522**. In some situations, it may be advantageous or

necessary to perform certain procedures at specific locations. If such a requirement does not

exist, the user may choose to not restrict the location at which the procedures are performed **524**.

The user may then select times and locations for one or more appointment(s) **526**. The system

defaults for the procedures being on the same day at the same location. If the user opts to have

one or more appointment(s) on the same day at the same location **526**, the user may select the

desired date and/or time range **528**, as well as view available appointments **530** for bundled

services (e.g., procedures having a specific sequence or time order). This information may then

be displayed **532**. If the user decides to have one or more appointment(s) on different days or at

different locations **526**, a user may select the desired date and time range **534** and view available

appointments for unbundled procedures **536**, and that information may then be displayed **538**.

Once the appointment(s) are displayed (**532** and **538**), a user may select an appointment **540**.

After the OPSI user selects an appointment, the appointment may be booked in a healthcare information system **548**, and the patient information **550** may be printed. The remaining sequence in this embodiment is illustrated in FIG. 5B beginning at **552**. When the patient presents himself/herself **554 560** for the procedure, the registration may be processed **566 572** and the physician orders may be processed **568 574**. If the patient does not present himself/herself, the appointment may be recorded as a no show **556 562**.

[0064]   Returning to FIG. 5A, if the OPSI user does not select an appointment **540**, the user may determine if every appointment should be selected **542**. If the OPSI user has selected times and locations for all appointments requiring scheduling, the appointment(s) may be booked in a healthcare information system **548**, and the patient information **550** may be printed. The remaining sequence is illustrated in FIG. 5B beginning at **552**. When the patient presents himself/herself **554 560** for the procedure, the registration may be processed **566 572** and the physician orders may be processed **568 574**. If the patient does not present himself/herself, the appointment may be recorded as a no show **556 562**.